

Message Text

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ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-09 H-02 INR-10 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SS-14 USIA-12

RSR-01 /081 W

----- 074432

R 310635 Z MAR 73

FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9433

INFO USDEL JEC PARIS

AMCONSUL BIEN HOA

AMCONSUL DANANG

AMCONSUL NHA TRANG

C O N F I D E N T I A L SAIGON 5320

E. O. 11652 GDS

TAGS: MILI PINT MOPS VS CB CA ID

SUBJECT: SITREP FOR MARCH 30, 1973

FOLLOWING SENT ACTION SAIGON FROM CAN THO MAR 30
REPEATED FOR YOUR INFO

QUOTE CAN THO 0108

SUMMARY: THE REGION VII DRV AND PRG DELEGATIONS DEPARTED MARCH 30, WITH THE LATTER INDICATING IT WOULD RETURN TO SERVE ON THE TPJMC. MILITARY INCIDENTS DECLINED IN NUMBER, BUT CASUALTIES ROSE WITH CONTINUED VC/ NVA SHELLING IN THE TRI TON AREA AND ATTACKS ON GVN OUTPOSTS IN EASTERN BAC LIEU. DEMOCRACY PARTY LEADERS DO NOT CONSIDER DECREE LAW-060 APPLIES TO UPCOMING VILLAGE ELECTIONS. END SUMMARY.

2. SECURITY SITUATION: (A) WHILE THE NUMBER OF INCIDENTS YESTERDAY WAS LOWER THAN IN THE LAST SEVERAL WEEKS, CASUALTIES WERE HEAVIER THAN USUAL WITH 33 GVN KIA. THERE WERE 8 SHARP GROUND ATTACKS, 25 ATTACKS BY FIRE, AND 4 TERRORIST INCIDENTS OF WHICH 2 WERE KIDNAPPINGS. THE HONG NGU- CAI CAI AREA WAS REASONABLY CALM, BUT SHELLING CONTINUED AROUND TRI TON.
(B) VC/ NVA GROUND ATTACKS AGAINST GVN OUTPOSTS IN NORTHERN VINH
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CHAU DISTRICT IN BAC LIEU WERE NUMEROUS WITH 7 OUTPOSTS HIT AND 4 OVERRUN. WE BELIEVE THESE ATTACKS ARE THE WORK OF A BATTALION OF THE NVC D-2 REGIMENT COOPERATING WITH THE VC SOC TRANG LOCAL FORCE BATTALION. VINH CHAU DISTRICT IN SOUTHERN BA XUYEN HAS A SECONDARY VC SUPPLY LINE WHICH THE VC ATTEMPTED TO SEIZE DURING THE IMMEDIATE CEASEFIRE PERIOD. THE MOST RECENT ATTACKS ARE DESIGNED TO WIDEN AND SECURE THIS SUPPLY LINE. MR IV G-2 ALSO SPECULATES THAT THE VC MAY WISH TO ESTABLISH A SHALLOW DRAFT SUPPLY SITE ON THE MY THANH RIVER.

3. ICCS: CANADIANS AND INDONESIANS FROM ICCS TRI TON INVESTIGATED MARCH 27, A GVN REPORTED 122 MM ROCKET ATTACK ON LAC TUOI VILLAGE, TINH BIEN DISTRICT, CHAU DOC PROVINCE. THE INVESTIGATING TEAM THOUGHT THE ROCKET CRATER HAD BEEN DOCTORED. THEY FOUND POWDER AND FRAGMENTS FROM A 155 MM ARTILLERY ROUND IN WHAT APPEARED TO BE A CRATER FROM A SMALL MORTAR ROUND. THE USJMC HAS URGED THE GVN NOT TO AUGMENT OR TAMPER WITH EVIDENCE OF CEASEFIRE VIOLATIONS.

4. JMC: (A). DRV DELEGATES TO THE REGION VII FPJMC DEPARTED CAN THO FOR SAIGON MARCH 30 ACCOMPANIED BY THE PRG DELEGATES. ACCORDING TO THE ICCS, THE PRG DELEGATES EXPECT TO RETURN TO CAN THO WHEN THE TPJMC IS ESTABLISHED. ONE PRG OFFICER COMMENTED THAT HIS DELEGATION WOULD NOT RETURN UNDER THE " SAME CONDITIONS," PRESUMABLY A REFERENCE TO THEIR FENCED- IN QUARTERS ABOUT 3 MILES OUTSIDE OF CAN THO, WHICH THEY CLAIM ARE UNSATISFACTORY.

(B). COLONEL LOI, THE GVN FPJMC REGION VI CHIEF, TOLD A VICE CONSUL MARCH 28 THAT AGREEMENT HAS BEEN REACHED ON STAFFING THE REGION VI GVN TPJMC TEAMS. THE GVN WILL HAVE FORTY MEMBERS AT REGION HEADQUARTERS AND TEN STATIONED IN EACH OF THE FIVE PROVINCES IN REGION VI. THE DINH TUONG PROVINCE TEAM WILL BE QUARTERED WITH THE REGION VI TEAM IN MY THO. COL. LOI EXPECTED THE TEAMS TO DEPLOY A COUPLE OF WEEKS AFTER THE TPJMC SAIGON TALKS BEGIN.

5. GVN ACTIVITY: (A). VO THANH LIEM, CHAIRMAN OF THE BA XUYEN PROVINCE COUNCIL AND DEMOCRACY PARTY STALAART, WENT TO SAIGON RECENTLY TO DISCUSS VILLAGE ELECTIONS. HE MET WITH DEMOCRACY PARTY LEADERS INCLUDING COL. QUACH HUYNH HA, FORMER BA XUYEN PROVINCE CHIEF.

IEM REPORTS THAT DECREE LAW-060 DOES NOT APPLY TO LOCAL ELECTIONS. THEREFORE NON- DP CANDIDATES, WITH THE EXCEPTION OF KNOWN OR SUSPECTED COMMUNISTS, WOULD BE ALLOWED TO RUN IN THE 28 VILLAGE ELECTIONS SCHEDULED FOR THE PROVINCE THIS MAY.

(B). BAC LIEU' S VIS WAS REORGANIZED INTO A NEW CIVILIAN PROSELYTIZING SERVICE LAST WEEK. WE UNDERSTAND A NEW
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INFORMATION PROGRAM DRAWING ON EX- VIS STAFF AND EMPHASIZING

FACR TO FACE CONTACT AT THE HAMLET LEVEL IS TO BE LAUNCHED THIS WEEK THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY. MOBILE INTER- VILLAGE GROUPS (MIVG) IN BAC LIEU ARE BROKEN DOWN INTO TWO APPROXIMATELY SEVEN TO TEN- MAN SUB- GROUPS. MIVG ACTIVITIES WILL BE COORDINATED WITH THOSE OF OTHER GROUPS DIRECTLY UNDER THE AUSPICES OF THE POLITICAL STRUGGLE COMMITTEE. THU DUC CADETS WILL CONTINUE TO PARTICIPATE.

6. REFUGEES: A CAMBODIAN NAVY CONVOY TOOK 624 CAMBODIAN REFUGEES FROM TAN CHAU DISTRICT TOWN, CHAU DOC PROVINCE, TO PHNOM PENH MARCH 24. MOST OF THE REMAINING CAMBODIAN REFUGEES IN THE TAN CHAU AREA, APPROXIMATELY 1000 PEOPLE, HAVE DRIFTED BACK TO THE REFUGEE CAMPS IN TINH BIEN DISTRICT TO AVOID ROCKET ATTACKS. THE FEW REFUGEES STILL IN TAN CHAU ARE STAYING WITH FRIENDS AND CARING FOR RELATIVES WOUNDED IN THE MARCH 20 AND 21 ATTACKS (CAN THO 0068). CHAU DOC OFFICIALS REPORT THAT THERE ARE NOW MORE THAN 7500 CAMBODIAN REFUGEES AT KNOWN LOCATION IN THAT

PROVINCE. SIGNED BARNES UNQUOTE
BENNETT

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*** Current Classification *** CONFIDENTIAL

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